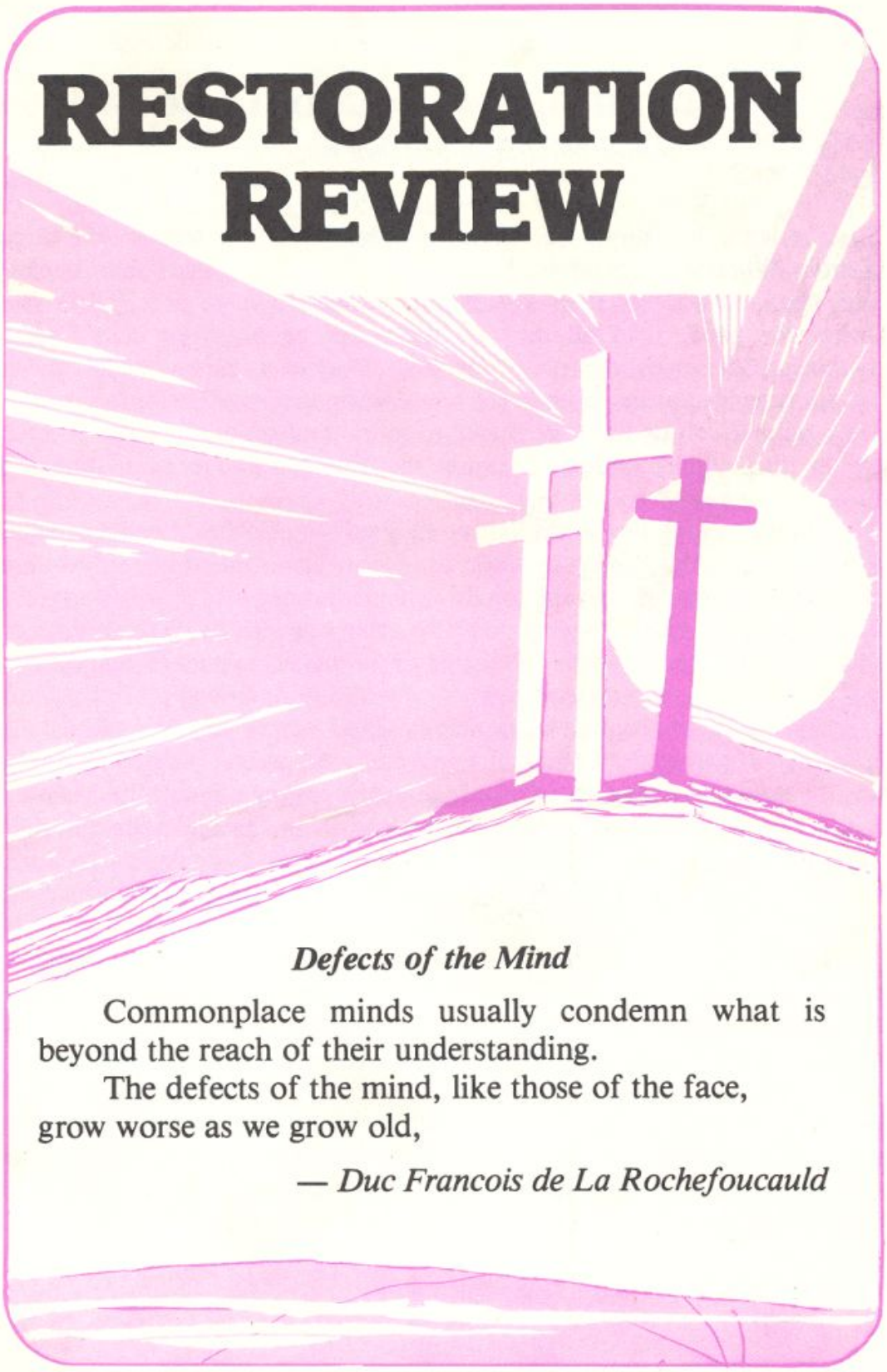
RESTORATION REVIEW



Defects of the Mind

Commonplace minds usually condemn what is beyond the reach of their understanding.

The defects of the mind, like those of the face, grow worse as we grow old,

— Duc Francois de La Rochefoucauld

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With All Your Mind . . .

MAKING NONSENSE OUT OF LOGIC

They made nonsense out of logic and their empty minds were darkened. --- Ro. 1:21 (Jerusalem)

The world has always been dominated by ideas more than by the force of arms. Whether for good or ill opinions prove to be stronger than armies. Karl Marx, who never fired a shot, has influenced more lives, albeit not always for good, than all the military power of Napoleon and Caesar combined. Communistic ideology now holds sway over half the world, and it has not depended as much upon the sword as upon ideas. The influence of a godly Mother, whose life is dedicated to moral and spiritual values, is often greater than all the external pressures that are brought to bear upon her children.

"Ideas control the world," insisted President Garfield, and he might have added that this is why the world has such a hard time of it, for ideas are often the creation of corrupt minds and are promoted for evil purposes. Victor Hugo was right in saying that "No army can withstand the strength of an idea whose time has come," but that unfortunately applies to evil ideas as well as good ones. Satan seems to know when to move in and make havoc of a nation or an individual by darkening their empty minds and making nonsense of their logic. The main thing that went wrong in Nazi Germany was the *thinking* (or the lack of it) of the people. Many a man's life has been ruined by the invasion of a false ideology, such as the notion that society owes him something or that the government is obligated to take care of him. We are inclined to buy the old myth that we do *not* have to reap what we sow.

Paul's concern in Romans 1 is with corrupt ideas festering in degenerate minds. "The more they called themselves philosophers," he said, "the more stupid they became" (verse 22), which shows it was a crisis in thinking. He says they made nonsense of their logic and their empty minds were darkened. "They gave up divine truth for a lie and have worshiped and served creatures instead of the creator," he adds, and then says that God abandoned them to "degrading passions," which includes menfolk giving up natural intercourse with women "to be consumed with passion for each other," and women doing unnatural things with each other.

The apostle says that all this is a matter of rational man becoming irrational: "Since they refused to see it was rational to acknowledge God, God has left them to their own irrational ideas and to their monstrous behavior." (verse 28) Paul finds man without excuse, for "they knew God and yet refused to honor him as God or to thank him." (verse

21) Man knows *logically* that there is a God to whom he is to give account: "What can be known about God is perfectly plain to them since God himself has made it plain." (verse 19) But he will not acknowledge what he knows to be true, opting for "filthy enjoyments and the practices with which they dishonor their own bodies." (verse 24)

The mind can thus be poisoned by one's carnal nature. In that same Rom. 1 Paul lists those sins that destroy responsible thought, such as greed, malice, envy, arrogance, spite. These can be thought of as *moral* fallacies in that they destroy man's natural capacity to seek after God. Ecc. 7:29 argues the point that "God made man upright, but he has sought out many inventions." This does not mean that we are naturally good, but that God created us with the mental capacity to seek after him and find him (Acts 17:27). This we will do if we do not yield to sin and allow pride and arrogance to corrupt our thinking.

The mind can be *dulled* (2 Cor. 3:14) and become *vain* (Eph. 4:17) and *corrupt* (2 Tim. 3:8) and *defiled* (Tit. 1:15) and *poisoned* (Acts 14:2). Eph. 4:22 shows that this mental corruption comes through "following illusory desires," or by the wrong kind of thinking about life, *deceitful lusts* as the KJV puts it. And so the apostle goes on to call for renewal of mind: "Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's way, in the goodness and holiness of the truth." This revolution of the mind can be realized only in the Christ: "Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ; forget about satisfying your bodies with all their cravings" (Rom. 13:14).

Most religions of the world realize that it is the mind that must be controlled, even when they do not look to Jesus as the power for renewing the mind. Human suffering is caused by unbridled desires, Buddha taught, whose very name means "the Enlightened One," which suggests that he had found the answer to human woes. The desires of the mind, which are only compounded by possessions, must be overcome. Happiness comes through not craving. Buddhism thus teaches "the Noble Eightfold Path" for the control of desires: right thinking, right desires, right speech, right conduct, right vocation, right mindfulness, right concentration.

Buddhism, like all forms of humanism, may be right in identifying the problem, but it has no way of providing the resources for the renewal it seeks. Rules for overcoming the lusts of the mind are not enough, for "the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). If God does not give man a Helper, he is in deep trouble.

Jesus presents an important view of human nature in his parable of the prodigal son, which would better be called the parable of the loving father or even "the gospel within the gospel," for it is full of good news. We may conclude that it is *natural* for the prodigal to behave the way he did. We all sin by going astray in one way or another, caused by our

pride and arrogance. Self is enthroned in our hearts and minds. The parable makes all this clear, for the wayward boy *knew* he was doing wrong, wasting his substance through riotous living. His mind mattered, and his mind had gone wrong. The Lord pays human nature a compliment in all this drama. In the pig pen where the wayward lad was inclined to stuff himself with the pods that the swine ate, *he came to himself.*

Even when our minds are corrupted and defiled by sinful pride, we can turn to something fine and noble within us, as if God placed something of himself deep within our makeup. We may become corrupt, but we can still come to ourselves, our *real* selves, and resolve to arise and go to our Father, not with any demands but to sue for his mercy. Here is the emptiness of Buddhism and all philosophies that presume that man's extremity is his own opportunity, that he can save himself by getting his thinking straight. We must have a Helper, one who is able to lift us above the swine. *I will arise and go to my father!* That is the only resolution of the mind that redeems and renews the mind.

Descartes, whose principles for the direction of the mind we referred to in our last, held that men are equally endowed with good sense, by which he meant the ability to distinguish between good and evil. Some are more efficient in their thinking, he granted, and some are more vigorous in solving problems, but this is because they apply their minds better and not because they are endowed with more reason. We are all equally capable of reasoning, he insisted, and we improve our reasoning ability by using right methods of thinking. If a person appears superior in reasoning, it is not, according to Descartes, that he is more endowed by nature than others, but that he has learned better how to apply his mind. When Newton's students asked the master scientist how he knew so much, he replied "By applying my mind to it." This is what Descartes is saying. The difference between the Newtons and the rest of us is that they learned how to think and how to avoid common fallacies, and they worked at it harder than most of us are willing to work. It is told on Edison, who made poor marks in school before he learned how to work mentally, that he accounted for his successes on the basis of 10% inspiration and 90 % perspiration.

True, some may be slower than others, but they are still equal in being able to distinguish between right and wrong, and such ones often surpass the quick-minded in discernment because they have learned to avoid those irrational habits that destroy sound reasoning. Prejudice, for instance, fouls up one's thinking, and the prejudiced person will find himself excelled by one who has overcome that form of irrationality. Because of sectarian pride some people have already decided what they are going to believe, all evidence to the contrary notwithstanding. Such ones are wayward and irrational, like the prodigal son, and they too need to "come to themselves" and *think* as God has created them to think, apart from bias and pride.

Descartes' thesis that people are generally equal in their ability to reason is encouraging to us "average" folk, and it appears to be the implication of scripture. The Bible is a book that expects to be understood, for the most part at least. "When you read you may understand" (Eph. 3:4) is the assumption of scripture, as is "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches" (Rev. 2:7). The injunction "Take heed therefore how you hear" (Lk. 8:18) implies that we can all hear well enough, *if we really want to hear.* We are to take heed, not because we may be poor reasoners, but to make sure our hearts are right and that we really want to know. The parable reveals that there are different kinds of hearers, not because of unequal capacity to grasp ideas, but because some allow Satan to influence them, some yield to sin, some are enamored with "the riches and pleasures of this life."

Those who had "honest and good heart" --- not brighter minds --- are the ones who bore fruit with patience. The difference between people, therefore, is not their ability to reason or to hear, but in whether they allow themselves to be encumbered with myths, errors, fallacies, biases, tyrannies, superstitions, and all the rest.

There is in the April issue of *Reader's Digest* the moving story of Huber Matos, the man who defied Castro, which you should by all means read. A revolutionary alongside Castro, he understood that the revolution would give Cuba back to the people, including free elections and a government of their own choosing. He did not realize that Castro was a Communist. Matos reminded Castro of his promises and urged his friend to fulfill them, which caused the dictator to turn on him, falsely accusing him. Matos spent 20 years in the brutal prisons of Castro's Cuba, refusing all overtures to gain freedom through a compromise of convictions, even when he was tortured.

The difference between the two men is clear. Castro's mind is dulled and blinded by a political ideology, one that he can protect only by oppressive tactics. His mind is made up, and he will destroy anyone, including bosom friends, that gets in his way. Huber was motivated by truth and freedom, and by the promises he had made. He was not for sale, not at any price. Even though his body was wracked by pain and deprivation through decades, his mind remained clear. He refused to yield to all of Castro's fallacies and intimidations, a good example of what it means to have an honest and good heart.

This points to what this series is getting at. We can allow the evil influences about us to make nonsense out of the logical mind that God has given us, or we can "keep our heart with all diligence" and not allow our minds to fall prey to fallacies and irrationality. --- *the Editor*

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OUR COSTLIEST SIN: EXCLUSIVISM

All sin is costly. It robs us of health, peace, and happiness. It destroys churches, homes, businesses by wrecking relationships. Above all it separates us from God, and so we are assured by scripture that *the wages of sin* is *death.* Many are "dead" even while they live, and this because of sin.

The great power of sin is its deceitfulness. We are hooked by it before we realize what has happened. Satan has always used tricks and cunning to do us in, and so Eph. 6:11 teaches us how to arm ourselves against "the wiles of the devil." This means that Satan is fraudulent. We think we are getting gold but it turns out to be all alloy; he invites us to a banquet, but only to poison us. It is noteworthy that Heb. 3:13 urges us to exhort one another each day lest we be "hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

We do not like to think of Christians becoming *hardened,* and most of us would insist that this has not happened to us, but this shows what sin, *deceitful* sin, can do. Sin can and does close our minds to new ideas and our hearts to new relationships and experiences. And Satan tricks us into supposing that our "hardness of heart" is loyalty to the old paths and our closed minds is soundness in the faith.

And so the sin of exclusivism has a halo of righteousness, and if anyone dares to remove the halo by questioning our separatist ways we brand him with some epithet, such as *liberal.* So this time around I thought it would be helpful to point out what this sin is costing us and not simply condemn it for the sin that it is. Once we see its high price tag we might be led to abandon it.

But let us make sure we agree on what we mean by exclusivism, and in this context I am referring especially to those of us in the Churches of Christ. When James DeForest Murch wrote his *Christians Only,* a history of the Restoration Movement, he gave descriptions of each of the three churches of the Movement. He called the Disciples of Christ, the left wing, "non-Biblical unionists." The Christian Churches, the centrists, he labeled "Biblical inclusivists." The Churches of Christ, whom he identified as the right wing, he called "Biblical exclusivists."

You may not like labels, but brother Murch (now deceased) was more right than wrong in his descriptions, at least in reference to Churches of Christ. We are biblicists and we are exclusivists. The first means we have an authoritative view towards the Bible and the second means that we suppose ourselves to be *the* church, excluding all others. If brother Murch missed it, it would be that there is a lot of overlapping in his categories. For

instance, a lot of folk in the Christian Churches are exclusivists too, and some Disciples are biblicists, and they are not always unionists. But *generally* speaking we may have to allow for Murch's categories.

So the sin of exclusivism is the arrogant assumption that we are right and everybody else is wrong, that we are the only Christians. If we allow that there are "Christians among the sects," an admission that often comes hard, then they are to leave the sects and join us, for we are not a sect. We are *the* Church of Christ, the only church there is, and the answer to a divided church is for all others to become like us. This is exclusivism plainly stated. We often use veiled language, hiding the grosser aspects of our claim, such as the term "the Lord's people," which would ordinarily be understood to apply to the church universal, though we apply it to ourselves alone.

Here is the price we pay for this sin:

1. *It gives us a distorted view of brotherhood and denies us joyous fellowship with other of God's children.*

If the only sisters and brothers I have are those in Churches of Christ, then I am much poorer than I think. I rejoice that the great host of "the spirits of just men made perfect" in heaven and the family of God on earth are my blood brothers in the Lord, and that I can enjoy fellowship with them all, both in this world and in the world to come. Since I gave up the proud sin of separatism I have found beautiful brothers and sisters everywhere, and what a blessing that is. This *ism* that Satan would hang on us denies us of one of heaven's greatest gifts, community life with all those that bear the likeness of Jesus. While God sent Jesus to make us brothers, this vicious *ism* separates God's people and causes them to treat each other as strangers or enemies instead of blood kin. It causes us to accept a sister because she belongs to the right party rather than to the right Person.

2. *It destroys the cooperative work of the church catholic.*

Satan really sold us a bill of goods when we bought the old line that because we do not endorse all that people believe and practice we can therefore have nothing to do with them. We are not even to attend other churches, except perhaps for weddings and funerals, for we would be "fellowshiping" their error. But it does not work the other way, for we expect others to come to us. Being *so* right creates strange logic. We read translations prepared by the denominations, we sing their songs and study their commentaries, and even use their seminaries to train our college professors and ministers and their mission-language schools to prepare our missionaries. But still we cannot "fellowship" them!

This journal's theme for 1980 is *With All Your Mind*, one purpose of which is to free the mind of those crippling fallacies that rob us of so many rich blessings. Here is one of those fallacies, known as the fallacy of division: *Because we cannot work with people in everything we therefore cannot work with them in anything.* The first part may be true of us all, but the *therefore* does not follow, for there are some areas in which all believers can work together, such as distributing Bibles, feeding the hungry, and fighting injustices. But the sin of exclusivism cripples all such efforts, separating us from the church catholic.

3. *It makes mockery of our plea for unity.*

Mark it well as a fact we must face: *a church that preaches unity and yet separates itself from all other Christians* is *not truly a unity church.* How do we expect anyone to take seriously anything we say about unity when we won't have anything to do with him? We cry *Unity!* to each other within our own churches, but we never reach out to others in any kind of unity effort. What kind of unity plea is that? We say we believe in unity, and yet we cannot even share with others in a Thanksgiving service. An exclusivist can no more be a unitist than a hermit can be a crusader. Let us face the bitter truth: we are *not* a unity people, and we are doing *nothing* for the sake of a united Church of God upon earth. *Nothing!* That will continue to be the case until we quit sinning, the sin of making all other of God's children *untouchables.*

4. *It turns missions into petty sectarianism.*

I visited recently with a brother who spent 20 years as a Church of Christ missionary in the Orient. He explained that his strategy was to "convert" those already reached by the Presbyterians and others. Now that he has a different view of the matter, he told me with tears in his eyes how he drove a wedge between humble Orientals and their missionary pastor, even to the building of a separate chapel across the road, dividing believers in Jesus in a pagan land. He broke as he cried out to me, "Leroy, that dear man had been laboring for 30 years among those people and, I destroyed his work in a matter of months!" He had me in tears as well. How tragic that we must export our Texas-Tennessee sectarianism to India and Thailand. We need to examine our ethics when we will draw upon others for missionary knowledge and language study, and *then* go where their missionaries go, not to work with them in reaching the heathen, but to work against them by proselyting their converts. Exclusivism makes for strange morality as well as strange logic. While our missionary situation continues to be this way generally, we can rejoice that we have a growing number of missionaries who are true ecumenists, and this without surrendering any truth.

I am presently reading the story of Archibald McLean, who was the guiding force of our Foreign Missionary Society, which was founded in 1875, well before the Churches of Christ became a separate church in the Restoration Movement. What a passion he had for souls! He recruited preachers, prepared them, and sent them all over the world. Then he visited all the mission stations, sending reports to the papers back home, which make fascinating reading. He always visited *all* the missionaries, of whatever denomination, praying with them and encouraging them. He lived a very simple, almost monastic, life, in order to send as much money as possible to China or wherever, and he prayed for every missionary by name every day.

I was touched by his visit to Hawaii, where Congregational missionaries had taken the story of Jesus a century before our men were ever there, and with great hardship and sacrifice. McLean not only visited the mission station of these people, but went to the cemetery where the old missionaries of yesteryear lay sleeping, men who had invaded the strongholds of heathendom and turned thousands to the cross of Jesus, helping to make Hawaii what it is today. McLean stood in reverence at their graves, men who died away from home for Jesus' sake, and with hat in hand he thanked God for their sacrificial lives.

And yet McLean surrendered not one truth. A few pages later we find him in India, baptizing his converts with his own hands and according to his own understanding. He was a magnanimous man made free by the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ.

Isn't that the way you want the Church of Christ to be today? We can overcome the sin of exclusivism by looking to Jesus rather than to the party. The way out is for you and me to take the lead. The old Chinese brother had something when he prayed, "Lord, reform your church --- *beginning with me!"* --- *The Editor*

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Highlights in Restoration History . . .

RESTORATION OR REFORMATION?

For years we have been calling this series *restoration* history, but it may be time to question the integrity of that term. The more I study our history the more convinced I am of the inappropriateness of the term *restoration,* which means I may eventually change the name not only of this feature of the journal but the name of the journal itself. I will explain what I mean.

There is in history a restoration movement, or several of them, but the movement launched by O'Kelly-Stone-Campbell was not one of them. Theirs was a *reformation,* which is what they called it (and themselves *reformers),* which is a concept quite different from restoration. Restorationism is a doctrine about the church that presumes that (1) the true church went out of existence; (2) the existing churches are false churches; (3) the primitive church as the ideal church is revealed in the New Testament on a "fixed pattern" basis; (4) we are to "restore" that church and thus have the one true church.

There have been more than 400 restorationist groups, all claiming to be the true church. These all go back to the days of the Reformation under Luther and Calvin when some of their followers believed they were wrong in trying to reform the Roman Catholic Church. It cannot be reformed, their critics claimed, so they broke with the Reformation and started what has come to be known as "the radical reformation." These were the Anabaptists, but they soon divided into Mennonites, the Amish, etc. The Plymouth Brethren have their roots here, and they are today divided six or eight different ways. Restorationists groups *always* divide again and again and again, for restorationism by its very nature is divisive.

Reformation is entirely different. It accepts a less-than-perfect church as still the church, and it believes the church has always existed, just as Jesus said it would. But it has always been in need of reform, even from the beginning. No primitive church was perfect, and they all needed reformation, more or less. In his letters to the churches Paul was a *reformer,* not a restorationist. He did not want to junk the Corinthian church, believing it to be a false church. It was rather the Body of Christ, and he called it that and recognized it as such, even though it needed reformation. He did not tell the faithful to leave and start "a loyal church."

No congregation is perfect. If there was such, it would no longer be once you and I found out about it and joined it. No church in history has ever been all it should be, just as no person has ever been. Just as we are always to be reforming our lives, which is what *repentance* means, we are also to be reforming the church, which is always erroneous and imperfect to some degree. That is *reformation.* The restorationist, on the other hand, believes that he has restored the one true church, and this from the *pattern* set forth in scripture. All others have to be wrong. There can be no error or "brothers in error." And so such ones continually divide, for when some new "truth" is found in the pattern a "loyal church" starts for those who want *all* the truth. They usually debate each other as to whether the new interpretation is indeed "according to the pattern," or whether an "innovation" that has been introduced is authorized by the pattern.

Recent research by Prof. George Williams of Harvard reveals much about the character of these sub-groups of the Reformation, who rejected the Reformation and became restorationists, believing that they had restored the true church. The historians call this "the restoration motif" or primitivism, and Prof. Williams says, "So widespread was restorationism (restitutionism) as the sixteenth-century version of primitivism that it may be said to be one of the marks of the Radical Reformation." He turned up books written on the restoration movement, the titles bearing that name.

Our pioneers did not believe that the church had apostatized to the point that it no longer existed, nor did they believe that their mission was to "restore" the true church. Their mission was rather to unite the Christians in all the sects. Those sects were not the church, to be sure, but God's people were in those sects and *they* were the church. As reformers they sought to restore *to* the church (to be distinguished from restoring the church itself) the ancient order of things, including unity.

Here are a few examples of how they referred to their work as reformers.

When Robert Richardson wrote *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell,* a sub-title read: "A view of the Origin, Progress, and Principles of the Religious Reformation which he advocated."

Barton W. Stone about Alexander Campbell: "I am constrained, and willingly constrained to acknowledge him the greatest promoter of this reformation of any man living. The Lord reward him!" (Biography of Barton W. Stone, p. 76)

Concerning Walter Scott: "It is our melancholy task to record the death of one of the pioneers of the current Reformation." *(Christian Pioneer,* 1861, p. 43)

On the mission of the pioneers: "The essential work of the current Reformation has been to uncover from the sectarian rubbish of ages this 'precious corner stone' (Jesus Christ)" - *Christian Pioneer, 1861.*

Concerning the Brush Run church: "The oldest and most favored church in the Reformation." *(Mill. Harb.,* 1856, p. 57)

Isaac Errett in *Mill. Harb.* (1861) wrote a series of nine articles on the work they were doing, entitled "A Plea for Reformation," in which he constantly described the work as "the reformation which we plead."

Robert Richardson also did a series entitled "Reformation" that ran for 19 installments, detailing the plea of the pioneers. They start in the 1847 *Mill. Harb.*

Alexander Campbell also wrote a series on "Anecdotes, Incidents, and Facts Connected with the Origin and Progress of the Current Reformation." *(Mill. Harb.*, 1848, p. 279)

Hundreds of letters appear in the *Mill. Harb.* from preachers *in* the field, always under the title of "Progress of Reform." T. M. Allen of Missouri wrote to Campbell more than any other, in almost every issue of the paper for 30 years. He would often refer to how he was "contending for Reformation."

T. P. Haley in *The Christian Church in Missouri* (1888), p. 91 says: "It is proposed to record in this volume such incidents in the lives of the pioneer preachers of the current reformation in Missouri and the early history of the Church of Christ."

Alexander Campbell writing to Ovid Butler: "Your opinions are of deep import, involving much of the moral character and future destiny of this Reformation." *(Mill. Harb.,* 1851, p. 431)

These are but a few of the thousands of references that could be given, showing that our pioneers thought in terms of *reformation.* They almost never used the word *restoration,* though it did occasionally appear. At least once Campbell used "reformation or restoration" as if they were synonyms to him, but this can hardly be deduced since he used the latter term so rarely. He used both terms in the title of a book: *The Christian System* "in reference to the union of Christians, and a restoration of primitive Christianity, as plead in the current reformation."

He might speak of restoring primitive Christianity or "the ancient order" but never of restoring the church, for there is a vast difference, as we have seen. After mud and water had injured the art museums of Florence, Italy, they might have referred to restoring pristine beauty to a Rembrandt, but not of restoring a Rembrandt (as if it did not exist).

It is significant that the heirs of the Stone-Campbell reformation movement almost never call it anything except the Restoration Movement. When we do this we place ourselves in the tradition of the Anabaptists and the radicals who suppose that they and they alone are the true church, and not within the reformed tradition where our pioneers placed themselves.

Reformers have less reason to divide just as they have more reason to be inclusivistic, for they accept the church's fallibility even while they endeavor to make it perfect. They do not buy the fallacy that the scriptures provide a fixed pattern that provides the details for the work, worship and organization of the church. They see that even the New Testament churches were different from each other, and that if you sought to "restore the primitive church," you would have to decide which church to restore. They rather see the

scriptures as providing that norm for the church that enables us to do for our time what they did for theirs. They tolerate error and imperfection in that they realize that they have always been and always will be, but they labor to minimize the things that are wrong.

Restorationism, on the other hand, is the cause of all our divisions, for by its very nature it is exclusivistic. The Mormons are a good example of restorationists, being "the restored church of the latter day saints." One verse in "the pattern" refers to being baptized for the dead. This is inflated into a major doctrine, and unless you accept their interpretation you cannot be a Mormon. There have been hundreds of such sects.

Its seeds are in every church. Prof. Williams says it was in the Reformation itself, especially in Calvin, and to the extent it gained dominance divisions came. It was in the Stone-Campbell Movement, but strong *reformation* leaders kept it at bay for generations, though it always troubled the Movement. Following the death of those leaders who insisted that we can have varying opinions and still be united, a new leadership emerged that was restorationist and exclusivistic. This led to a separate group by the 1890's known as "the Churches of Christ."

As a restorationist church, the Church of Christ has always been divisive, dividing once every ten years since its existence. It will continue to divide unless it surrenders its exclusivistic-restorationist view of the church and accepts the reformation view of its earliest pioneers, who never had the notion that they and they alone were the one true church. Since restorationists will have nothing to do with other churches, they can never be a unity people. As reformers we can reach out to others and make unity our business. We reform the church by building bridges of love and fellowship between all God's children --- *the Editor*

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Pilgrimage of Joy. . . No. 44

DRAMA AT HARVARD

W. Carl Ketcherside

In 1958, Erskine Caldwell wrote in the July issue of Atlantic Monthly these words: "I think you must remember that a writer is a simple-minded person to begin with and go on that basis. He's not a great mind. He's not a great thinker, he's not a great philosopher, he's a story-teller." I take a lot of comfort from that observation and rather suspect I am a living example of it, although not too well. If one had to be a great philosopher, this story would wither on the vine.

I began the year of 1969 with a trip to Miami, Florida, where my good brother, Robert Shaw, was ministering to the First Christian Church. It was a Disciples of Christ congregation located squarely in the downtown area. The building was a huge and imposing structure. In former days it had been fIlled to capacity in the fall and winter. The preacher in those days had specialized and speculated on prophetic interpretation and "snow-birds" from the north filled the place. There were almost as many on Sunday night as on Sunday morning. Many of the wealthy and sophisticated northerners came to know each other and looked forward to seeing each other at the church when the first flakes began to fly in Michigan and Ohio.

But the scene had changed. Cubans had flocked into Florida and settled in the city center. The old stores moved out and Spanish-speaking people surrounded the church location. Many of the new arrivals were Catholic. Many others had no religious affiliation at all. The audience got down to about 250. They made a little huddle in the midst of the great structure designed to seat fifteen hundred. They talked with nostalgia about the great days of yesteryear and dreamed rosy dreams of the past. Some of them were still possessed of courage. They wanted to relate to their changing world.

I held sessions every night during which I sought to speak with encouragement and "strengthen the things which remained." The church was suffering with internal pressures. The question of restructure troubled them. Brother Shaw was a conservative in the truest sense. Each morning I held a meeting during which I sought to answer the questions of those who were present. Men came from the Independent Christian Churches and from non-instrument Churches of Christ. Some of the questions were particularly touchy.

I recommended that all those who wanted to maintain the faith as it was once delivered exchange addresses and start a little paper to be circulated among all, keeping each other informed as to their plans. I suggested at a Minister's Breakfast that there was surely some areas in which all who loved Jesus could work together. I further suggested that the preachers of all groups meet and eat together each month and discuss the mutual problems in such a great national "playground." I was speaker at a luncheon at the Exchange Club one day. I spoke of the need of the recapture of a moral dynamic for America. It was pleasing to see the response.

The following month I was back in Central Florida for the Annual Spring Spiritual Clinic which was held on successive nights in Orlando, Cocoa and Daytona. As my policy was, following my speech in each of these places, I invited questions from the audience. As was generally the case this proved to be the most interesting feature of all. Some of those in the audience had evidently been saving up their questions and finally found a chance to use them.

I next went to the School of Christian Living in Louisville, Kentucky. Each night the chief of police and myself addressed the audience upon the spiritual and ethical phases of the Christian walk. During the five days I was there I spoke 17 times. I addressed Circle-K at Kentucky Southern College, spoke to 1100 students at Seneca High School; to the entire student body at Old Kentucky Home High School, in Bardstown; and to the Junior High School at Boston. It was a real pleasure to share with these young people, some of whom were very brilliant and perceptive, and give them hope. It must be remembered that the Vietnam War was still going on, the draft was a way of life for young men, and there was a genuine struggle in their emerging consciousness as to what was right and what was wrong.

I addressed a noon luncheon of the Kiwanis Club at the Executive Inn, and spoke to the faculty and students at the College of the Scriptures. This was a black school primarily operated to train preachers of the good news. I met and shared with them. During the time I was in Louisville I was on a one hour open line program over WFIA. The listeners zero in on anyone who tries to answer their questions. I enjoyed the give-and-take of it.

I rode one night with the police. I reported at headquarters and was assigned to a squad car until midnight. Then we returned to headquarters and I rode with two other men until 3:00 a.m. It was astonishing the different kinds of calls that were received. I was allowed to go in with the police. We refereed family fights, picked up sodden drunks, investigated a robbery, and broke up a gang fight at an all-night eatery. I came to have a tremendous respect for the “Men in blue.” All with whom I rode were young and a part of “the new breed” who deserve a lot of credit.

March 26-28 found me at Scottsbluff, Nebraska, at Platte Valley Christian College, where I spoke five times. The audience came from long distances and people were present from Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska. While I was there I granted an interview over the radio at Station KOLT, and another over television KSTF-TV. In addition to this I held a dialogue session at Nebraska Western College. Many of the students were from farms and ranches in the area. I found them alive to what was happening in the world but generally more conservative than their counterparts back east.

On the last day of my stay there, news was flashed over the wires, of the death of Dwight David Eisenhower, at the age of 78. He returned from the European theater of war as a hero to become the 34th president of the United States. The nation mourned his passing and Nell and I went to see the train bearing his body back to Abilene as it came through our city. It was swathed in black bunting. Ike was buried close to his simple old-fashioned childhood home. His mother had been a Bible-reading woman who was opposed to all armed conflict. Her son had planned D-Day with its frightful toll of life.

It was about this time I received a call from Dr. Krister Stendahl, inviting me to Harvard University to deliver an address before the Divinity School on the theme "Toward A Conservative Ecumenism." I accepted and on April 7 appeared in Braun Room at the school where the lecture was to be given. I was to speak for thirty minutes, to be followed by three reactors to my speech. Then I would have fifteen minutes to reply, following which the audience would question me for thirty minutes. The only catch was that the audience did not want to stop when the hour was up.

The three reactors were all men of stature and prominence in the theological world. Dr. Stendahl, who was first, was Dean of the Divinity School and a recognized leader in the World Council of Churches. He had, but a short time before, delivered a position paper at the convention in Uppsala, Sweden. Dr. William Robert Hutchison, was Professor of the History of Religion in America. He was born near Washington, Pennsylvania, where Thomas Campbell lived and wrote "The Declaration Address." Dr. Hutchison knew the restoration movement topside and bottom. Starting out in life as a Presbyterian, he had since become a Quaker, a position which he found more comfortable because of the historic emphasis for peace. The third reactor was James Valentine Fisher, a Ph.D. candidate, and a brilliant student. He was the son of Chaplain Fisher who had arranged for me to be at Langley Air Force Base.

I began with a definition of ecumenism which lifted it out of the political wrangle in which it had become engaged, and separated it from the various theological interpretations placed upon it. I then showed the extent, nature, place and purpose of the unity we seek. I affirmed that under the prayer of Jesus, whom I recognized as Lord, we were obligated to seek the unity of all those who believe in Him through the apostolic testimony. Therefore, any attempt at a confederation of so-called world religions was not only foreign to the design of heaven but would do despite to the divine purpose and plan "which was to unite all things in one, in Christ Jesus."

Dr. Stendahl commended my distinction between *kerygma* and *didache,* and pointed out the "initial message to the world was referred to as the gospel, or good news, as distinguished from the doctrine, in which all of us are obligated to grow as a natural effect of our acceptance of the message concerning Jesus. His prime objection was a fear that, in our attempt to get rid of traditional forms and fixtures, we would be ensnared into the common trap of devising other structures which would enslave men more than those from which we had escaped. Dr. Hutchison traced the course of the restoration movement and its multitudinous divisions, ticking them off on his fingers, and expressed the maxim that "by their fruits ye shall know them." He felt that the only thing we could expect was more division, and not more unity. He thought it was like inviting a fox into a chicken house to

unite the chickens. He might accomplish his purpose but Dr. Hutchison did not relish the idea of how and where it would be done.

Dr. Fisher objected that too little had been said about the *pneuma*, or Spirit, as the uniting power. My reply to all of this was that the men had preconceived what they thought I would say and had already formed their reactions before hearing it. Consequently, they had to give their speeches whether they were appropriate or not. I had not appeared as a defender of the restoration movement, and had not even mentioned it. I was there as an apologist for a conservative ecumenism and wherever it took me I was willing to go regardless of my past, just as Dr. Hutchison was no longer a Presbyterian.

Present for the confrontation was the Secretary of the Archdiocese of Boston. I met her before the encounter and she told me that the archdiocesan council was greatly concerned with modern trends and had sent her to glean what I had to say about a more conservative ecumenism. She took copious notes while I was speaking and again when I answered questions. It would have been interesting to know what transpired when she reported back to the council.

The Boston Globe had a reporter present also and the write-up in the paper next morning was quite lengthy and gave a lot of coverage. It was made to appear as a debate between Dr. Stendahl and myself, an idea I had earnestly sought to avoid. The report pretty well ignored what the other speakers had said, primarily because, as I suspect, the reporter did not know what they were talking about.

The student body was composed of some fine dedicated students who regarded the Bible as the norm. I could strengthen them. But it was the day of revolt and some who were present challenged everything held sacred in the past. They worshiped at the shrine of the god of the *Now* and paid homage to every freakish idea that was deemed to be new. I felt a real sense of compassion for churches which would be saddled with these restless young swaggering bullies.

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BOOK NOTES

One of the most interesting and influential of our pioneers of the second generation was David Lipscomb. who edited the *Gospel Advocate* for a half century. Robert Hooper of David Lipscomb College has produced a biography of “Uncle Dave” that you would do

well to own, if you have substantial interest in our history, entitled “Crying in the Wilderness.” 12.95 postpaid.

John S. May, 248 W. Vincennes, Linton, In. 47441 will send you free and postpaid a copy of his NT commentary, called *Am I Not Free?* It reflects the Campbellite position on the church, baptism, the Supper, and it is premillennial. You would do well to take advantage of this gracious offer, and do not hesitate. There are no strings attached.

William Barclay, the late widely read Scot who set out to treat every passage on the Spirit in the NT, eventually produced *The Promise of the Spirit.* Out of print for a time it is now available at 4.55 postpaid.

One of our most popular titles has been *Do Yourself A Favor: Love Your Wife,* by H. Page Williams. The chapter on “Under New Management” will change your life. 3.55 postpaid.

The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, edited by H. S. Gehman, one of my old profs at Princeton, is chock full of vital, dependable information. As prices are these days it is a bargain at 14.95 postpaid. *Cruden’s Concordance* at 7.50 makes a companion volume. You can easily find all the key words in scripture.

If you want an exciting, fresh treatment of !he church in today’s world, we recommend *The Community of the King,* by Howard A. Snyder. He probes the relationship between the kingdom and the church. 4.85 postpaid.

Do you own a *topical* Bible, one that is arranged not by books but by subjects? For instance, you can turn to “faith” or “divorce” and read all that the Bible says, which means that many verses appear under several headings, resulting in a 1600 page volume. *Nave’s Topical Bible* has long been respected, and we can now send it to you in limp edition for only 11.95.

If you are interested in our history, two books will be especially helpful. *The Fool of God,* by Louis Cochran, is a historical novel on the life of Alexander Campbell. Even the conversations are taken from actual events. 5.50 pp. *The Life of Elder Walter Scott* is one of the most colorful biographies of our people. 7.95 postpaid.

College Press is republishing the 10-volume set of Walter Scott’s *Evangelist,* which has long been unavailable. In some respects it may be more important to our history than Campbell’s journal, which was also republished but is already out of print again. This set may not last long since the number will be limited. You should reserve a set now if you are interested. The pre-publication price will be 80.00, a terrific bargain, but you need send no money yet. It is expected in October.

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READER'S EXCHANGE

BASIS FOR DETERMINING FELLOWSHIP

Dan Rogers, III

Last year I had two articles to appear in this journal, which advocated the unity-in-diversity doctrine, which I have come to realize is *patently false!*

As I phrased it in one article, "brotherhood is determined by Fatherhood." If one has obeyed the gospel, having been baptized into Christ for the remission of his sins, then he is a child of God (Acts 2:38; Gal. 3:27), and as such my brother. However, (and this is a point that I failed to grasp when I wrote the articles), *BROTHERHOOD IS NOT THE ONLY BASIS FOR DETERMINING FELLOWSHIP!*

Equally important in determining fellowship is whether my brother is walking in the light (I Jn. 1:7). If he is, then there can be fellowship between us. If he is not walking in the light, that is, if he is not walking according to the truth of the gospel (Gal. 2:14), then I cannot fellowship him (Gal. 2:9). In such a case, my brother is guilty of transgressing God's law, which is what sin is (I Jn. 3:4). As such, he does not abide in the doctrine of Christ (2 Jn. 9). *FOR ME TO EXTEND FELLOWSHIP TO HIM WHILE HE IS IN SUCH A CONDITION IS FOR ME TO BECOME A PARTAKER OF HIS SIN!* (2 Jn. 11).

Even though I desire to see unity and fellowship among all who have been baptized into Christ for the remission of sins, I must reject the doctrine of unity-in-diversity, for it is not according to the Truth of God. So I cannot fellowship those who are not walking in the light. I cannot, for example, fellowship those who advocate: (1) premillennialism, (2) instrumental music in worship, (3) institutionalism, (4) the doctrine of imputed righteousness, or (5) the doctrine of unity-in-diversity. *THAT IS, NOT IF I WANT TO BE TRUE TO GOD AND HIS WORD!*

(If we cannot believe in unity in diversity, what unity is there to believe in, for who sees everything exactly alike? But we agree that diversity has its limits. Paul, for instance, listed seven essentials in Eph. 4, which are hardly comparable to our brother's list of five above. If no. 4 is confusing to you, you are to be informed that this a new issue among the "conservative" Churches of Christ. It appears awkward in such a list since it is a scriptural term (Rom. 4:11 among others). In any event, we love our brother and we wish him well, regardless of party affiliation. And we will have our parties so long as we make opinions and deductions (rather than what the Bible *explicitly* states) tests of fellowship. - *Ed*)

I have a book on the life of Ashley S. Johnson. There was a great man. I am a graduate of the school he established, Johnson Bible College. I can remember in my days at the college that boys would come from the non-instrument group, my first knowledge of such a group, arguing against the instrument. They were told that they were welcome with open arms, but that there would be no contention about the organ, for or against, which usually ended it. - *R. B. McDonald, Prairie City, IO*

It is a crisp, snowy Lord's Day. I creep home feeling small, defeated, after hearing that stirring sermon on instrumental music, baptism, dancing, tongues. I am angry and embarrassed, but I smile anyway. My cozy little home is a refuge from the cold, hard house of the Lord just two blocks away. When my husband called from the hospital and asked me about the assembly, I cried and asked, *Can't we go home?* These people want to talk about things that do not matter, and they do not really *think.* Your paper is a comfort to me. Others here are also disturbed. - *Name withheld*

(Remember the beatitude, *Blessed are the disturbed, for they shall change things.* Think twice about going home, for you may be where the Lord wants you. What would Jesus do? - *Ed.*)

I am convinced that many in our fragmented brotherhood are fed up with the spiritual pablum they receive from the pulpit and also with the unloveliness inherent in our sectarian system. - *Ed Holley, Chapel Hill, NC*

THE AGED SPEAK

I love you much, and the magazine is a great pleasure. I am 77 years old, so I probably won't see the day that you and Carl are working and praying for. But maybe my precious children will. --- *Gladice Marlow, Carbondale, IL*

(They will! And you will too, though perhaps from a different perspective. *Ed.*)

When I recently read of a joint missionary effort between the Christian Church and the Northside Chruch of Christ in Santa Ana, it revived my hopes for our children. With my mind's eye I see at the end of a long dark tunnel of religious feudalism a light so bright that it could have descended from heaven. Is this only a mirage? At 83 dare I hope that by God's grace I may live to see the curse of the Hatfield-McCoy religious prototype lifted from the heads of our children? How does it look to you? --- *Stewart Hanson, Sr., Long Beach, CA.*

(Change will never come if we assume the situation is impossible. Lest we forget, there is power in believing. If we older ones will have faith in the future, it will inspire our youth. - *Ed.*)

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OUR CHANGING WORLD

Church of Christ and Christian Church folk are working together in a singles organization in El Dorado; Arkansas, along with believers in other churches. The Church of Christ involved is a non-Sunday School church, and Larry Epps reports that a beautiful fellowship is being enjoyed. He especially rejoices that Christians can work together in things like this. The damaging fallacy that we must overcome is that because we cannot work together in *everything* we cannot work together in anything.

News of another non-Sunday School Church of Christ comes from J. James Albert, Box 811, Corcoran, CA 93212, who has issued a booklet on "The Church Excluded from an Earthly Directory," which will be sent to you free by brother Albert for the asking. The excluded church is the Armona Church of Christ, Armona, Ca., which no longer appears in the "official" directory of the non-Sunday School churches, the reason given was that it is *liberal.* The church's defense quotes from Campbell's response to Mr. Rice, the Presbyterian, who charged him with being too broad: "The gentleman complains that our foundation is too broad --- too liberal. It is indeed broad, liberal and strong. If it were not so, it would not be a Christian foundation. Christianity is a liberal institution." The booklet, being an exchange between the excluded and the excluder, not only makes interesting reading but points up "our changing world" in Churches of Christ --- all kinds of Churches of Christ!

One brother who lives in this area reports that the Lectureship at Abilene Christian University this year, the theme of which was *Until He Comes,* had a strong unity note. Some of the main speakers stated that they were tired of all the bickering and looked forward to more unity and concerted effort for the 1980's.

In a previous issue of this journal we raised the question of whether "Church of Christ" is a denominational name, and we pointed to the exclusive use that is made of this name, whether it is printed on paper, carved in wood, or engraved in stone. There is now a new dimension, one that we were unaware of. You can now order "Church of Christ" pencils from Star, Inc., 7120 Burns St., Ft. Worth 76118 at 15.00 per gross.

The inimical Malcolm Muggeridge is saying that while Christendom is over Christ's kingdom is thriving. This is the theme of a book he is doing on *The End of Christendom,* to be published later this year. We hope to be able to tell you more about it.

The liveliest issue among Churches of Christ today, or certainly one of them, is the "authority" of elders, a concept that is really being reexamined. The newer elders among us are emphasizing the role of the shepherd rather than that of ruler. I recently listened to a tape from the Quail Valley Church of Christ in Houston, on talks made by the four elders to a special assembly of the congregation. While they showed marks of positive and dynamic leadership (one said an elder is God's foreman on the job), they denied any authoritarian role. Quail Valley has grown and prospered for the four years of its existence without a hired preacher, but they are now planning to hire a man to do evangelistic work among them. If you should hear the elders, you would understand why they would not need a "minister."

We have it on good word that one of our very prominent ministers personally asked Oral Roberts to pray for him, especially that he might overcome "intellectual pride." While this no doubt would bring him criticism within our circles (the contact with Roberts, that is, not the intellectual pride!) we think it is super. Surely *any* believer can pray for any other believer. And as for that particular prayer about pride, I think of the line from Kipling, "Still stands thine ancient sacrifice, an humble and contrite heart."

Many of our readers send four extra names when they renew, all five subs only 10.00. This is an easy way to introduce the paper to others, and you might be doing them a favor. A lot of our new readers see it that way. You can send as many names as you like at only 2.00 per name per year, new or renewals.

Our bound volume for 1979 will be ready later in the year. You need not order if you are on our list to receive it. Four other bound volumes are still available: *The Restoration Mind* (1971-72) at 4.95; *The Word Abused* (1975-76) at 5.95; *Principles of Unity and Fellowship* (1977) at 5.50; *The Ancient Order* (1978) at 5.50.

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